

From: Bradley Witteman
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 1:20pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Ms. / Sir,

I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed Microsoft Settlement.

I have been a user of Macintosh computers since my first Lisa in 1983 and of WinTel computers since I built my first Heath V-20 kit in 1984.

My whole family with the exception of myself are teachers... my mother for 26 years to the severely retarded and autistic, my father to engineering students at a college, my brother to nursing and computer science students at a college, my other brother to third grade Spanish-speaking kids and my sister to first grade speaking-speaking kids.

Each and every one of these five teachers has used a Macintosh to do everything from keeping attendance, creating class activities, authoring tests, writing grants, running class presentations, teaching their students about computers to writing correspondence to administrators and families.

I know my family better than anyone, and am the de facto IT support guy for them... they would never get any of these activities done if they were forced to use Windows computers... and any minute that you tie up with technological mumbo-jumbo is a minute you are stealing from their students.

I appreciate that there is a "digital divide" that exists in this country, however, I strongly disagree with the idea that allowing Microsoft to foster future consumption of their products is the way to ameliorate this situation. Take Microsofts billion dollars in cash, and allow those most needy school districts to make their own decision on the technology they would like to deploy. [I would also probably structure a temporary office to disperse this cash to ensure that as much of this money as possible gets into the school administrators hands while trying not to create yet another bureaucracy in Washington that will outlive its original purpose].

The only way that we are going to continue to have a vibrant computer industry is to foster alternatives to the mainstream. If Microsoft had been in a vacuum since 1984, they would never have copied the Macintosh user interface, would never have bothered to write office applications to compete with WordPerfect and Lotus 1-2-3, would never have created Money to compete with Quicken, would never have authored Publisher to compete with Adobe PageMaker, would never have written Internet Explorer to compete with Netscape Navigator. Im glad that Im no longer staring into an amber display at a command line interface, arent you?

If you have any questions you may contact me at:

Bradley J. Witteman
BradleyJW@yahoo.com

Best regards,

Brad

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